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SUBJECT: FAR EAST ELECTIONS: RESULTS AS PREDICTED

REF: A. A) VLADIVOSTOK 105  
    1B. B) VLADIVOSTOK 101

Summary

11. Elections completed in five Far East jurisdictions on October 12 yielded no surprises, with Yedinaya Rossiya and incumbents prevailing (reftel A). Roman Abramovich and his team handily won three seats in the Chukotka Duma, Yedinaya Rossiya won 12 of 14 Sakhalin seats, and incumbent mayors Pechyoniy and Sokolov held their positions in Magadan and Khabarovsk. Less than seven percent of voters turned up at the polls to elect the Governor's man Leonid Preminger to the Primorye Kray Duma.

Abramovich Returns to Chukotka

12. Former governor Roman Abramovich and his team trounced the opposition to win three seats in the Chukotka Duma. Support for Abramovich has been so strong that local politicians all but begged him to return to the area as chair the Okrug Duma (reftel B). Abramovich won 97 percent of the popular vote, with his deputies Andrey Gorodilov and Aramais Dallakyan gaining over 90 and 80 percent respectively.

Little Enthusiasm for Primorye Governor's Man

13. Leonid Preminger won his bid for Kray Duma seat in an election all but ignored by Vladivostok voters. Only 5,701 voters -- 7.62% of those eligible -- went to the polls, half of whom were ship crew members reportedly ordered to vote, with instructions on who to vote for, by their commanders. The Communist Party, whose local leader Vladimir Grishukov officially received 21 percent of the vote, has announced plans to file a grievance with the election committee contesting the results. Consulate contact Nikolay Markovtsev, whom many observers say has the most popular support, received 14 percent of the official tally.

Incumbent Mayors Re-elected

14. Incumbent mayors Aleksandr Sokolov of Khabarovsk and Vladimir Pechyoniy retained their posts. Sokolov remains genuinely popular with residents, and is generally given credit for improvements in the city that lead to its being named Russia's Most Comfortable City twice.

15. Magadan elections followed the Khabarovsk scenario -- a genuinely popular mayor won against weak and largely unknown opposition. Pechyoniy's main opponent Igor Novikov, a businessman with an alleged history of criminal activities, reportedly sent two associates to physically intimidate reporter and consulate contact Mikhail Gorbunov into publishing favorable articles about his candidacy.

**Yedinaya Rossiya Big In Sakhalin**

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**¶6.** As expected, Yedinaya Rossiya made a strong showing in Kray Duma elections, garnering 55 percent of the vote and 12 of 14 single-mandate Duma districts. The party now controls 21 of the 28 Duma seats. The Communists improved on the previous election's results, and will have four seats in the Duma. Spravedlivaya Rossia will hold two seats and the LDPR will have one.

**Comment**

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**¶7.** Though Yedinaya Rossiya won as expected, the Sakhalin elections may be a good indicator of the public's real mood. Many observers expected YR to receive much more than the 55 percent it got. The Communists, on the other, fared better than expected, receiving 23 percent this year compared to 14 percent in the previous election. If that result is interpreted as a protest vote against YR, it is interesting to note that the main opposition ends up coming from the Communists.

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